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TO THE PEOPLE OF NOVA SCOTIA.

FELLOW COUNTRYMEN,—

IN a series of Letters, addressed to you through the Press, some weeks ago, I believe that I demonstrated with sufficient accuracy—

1. That outrages, of singular atrocity, had been committed upon, and in the immediate neighborhood of, the Railway works, by Irish-Roman Catholics.

2. That the perpetrators of those outrages, sheltered and screened by a portion of their countrymen and co-religionists—openly abetted by a Catholic Association in Halifax—and released by the refusal of Catholic Jurors to convict any of them, had escaped the punishment of their crimes.

3. That this “mockery of justice” had been followed up by publications in the *Halifax Catholic* newspaper, in which the Protestants of Nova Scotia were gravely told that these outrages were committed in the name of religion—that “mercurial Irishmen” might repeat them if provoked, and that men who would otherwise have been “condemned to the Penitentiary,” had been turned loose upon the community, because the Chairman of the Railway Board, whose peculiar duty it was to protect the rights of industry upon the Public Works, had ventured to denounce their acts, and to expose the machinery by which the law was being set at defiance.

Not one of these statements has been disproved, after a fortnight's discussion in the House of Assembly. Two new facts have been elicited, in the course of the Debate, which throw further light upon these strange transactions—that a four-pound leaden weight was flung, in open Court, at the head of one of the principal witnesses; and that another, who had been shot at, was prevented from coming forward to give testimony, and compelled to escape to Sheet Harbour.

In my former letters I also proved, I trust, to your satisfaction, that among the Catholic population of Halifax there are certain disciples and admirers of Smith O'Brien, John Mitchell, and other disloyal and mischievous persons, who, having vainly endeavored to get up a civil war in their own country, are still bent upon the dismemberment of this Empire. That similar factions exist in the principal cities of North America. That, throughout the Russian War, these people openly sympathized with the enemies of Great Britain, and did their best to involve the United States in the controversy; and that, if war had been precipitated with that country, we should have had the Young Irishers in the United States invading the British Provinces, while their friends here could not have been relied upon to take up arms in our defence.

I also convicted Mr. William Condon, Guager and Proof Officer, under the late Government, of correspondence, during the War, with expatriated rebels and avowed enemies of England in the United States; I clearly proved that the organ of the Irish Catholics here had openly sympathized with Russia throughout that war; and, at its close, had publicly "thanked God for the humiliation of England."

Not one of these charges were shaken or disproved, by any statements made, or evidence adduced, in the course of the voluminous debates which have just been brought to a close in the House of Assembly. These further facts were however elicited, that the "New York Citizen," of which Mr. Condon was the Agent and Correspondent, had publicly gloried in the announcement that our gracious Queen Victoria was mad; and that Mr. Condon, as one of the Stewards of a public entertainment, had refused to per-

mit Her Majesty's name to be placed among the decorations of the room.

As it was known that the Scotch and French Catholics of Nova Scotia had been no parties to this treasonable correspondence, or to the utterance of these disloyal sentiments, the Government, acting upon the decided expressions of opinion in most of the leading organs of public sentiment, and with the concurrence of some of the Representatives of Scotch and French Catholic Constituencies, decided upon dismissing Mr. Condon—upon openly discountenancing the disloyal, and upon taking such measures as would render life and property secure upon the Public Works of this country.

No sooner was this policy announced by the dismissal of Mr. Condon, than it became apparent that the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Catholic Church was to be actively employed to break down the Administration. This power, evidently exerted upon unwilling minds, was soon felt to be at work. The Hon. Edward Kenny retired from the Presidency of the Legislative Council. Mr. Henry, the late Provincial Secretary, representing a Catholic Constituency, and Mr. McKinnon, a Scotch Catholic, his colleague in the representation of the County of Sydney, retired from the Executive. Mr. Wade, a Protestant gentleman representing Digby, in which County the French Catholics are numerous, joined the opposition; and four other gentlemen, Catholic representatives of Digby and Richmond, went over to the opposition.

The result was the passage of a vote of want of confidence, sustained by 28 members, of whom eight were Catholics, and two representing Catholic constituencies. It was unsuccessfully resisted by 22 gentlemen, all of whom were Protestants.

The members of the Administration immediately resigned. As the Government had been overthrown by the commission of acts which I had recommended, and by the assertion of principles which I believed to involve the religious liberty and freedom of thought so dear to the people of this country, I owed it to them, and to you, to follow their example; and to seal, by the sacrifice of my

worldly interests, the sincerity of my political and religious convictions.

Mr. Johnston, who defended the destroyers of Gourlay's Shanty, in the Courts, and in the Legislature; who justified the conduct of Mr. Condon; and who could see nothing wrong in the disloyal sentiments, and savage assaults upon our common Protestantism, promulgated by the Halifax Catholic, received the unanimous support of the Catholic members—with their aid he was enabled to overthrow the Administration, and to construct another.

The 22 Protestant gentlemen, thus deserted, now form a constitutional Opposition: united and firm, and including a large amount of the knowledge, experience, and practical sagacity of the House, they will, independent of all aid from without, form a powerful and efficient element of legislative deliberation.

What these men think of the nature of the influences brought in to disturb and controul our public affairs, may be gathered from one or two expressions, sufficiently significant to be recorded here:

The Hon. WILLIAM YOUNG spoke as follows:—

Sir,—I shall say but little at present of the influences which, though unseen are for the first time felt, palpably and fearfully felt, in the Legislature. These are influences unknown to the Constitution, they have been unscrupulously exercised, and present to the people of Nova Scotia a picture which demands their most serious consideration. What have we seen? The whole Catholic body, as one man, forsake the friends of a life time, and prepare to walk *en masse* across the floor of this House, and coalesce with the Conservatives, their avowed political opponents, to defeat an administration, which we were told by a leading member of the Roman Catholic body, up to the close of last session, retained their confidence. It is undeniable then, that a mysterious and powerful agency has affected this change; a change, too, brought about by no hostility of opinion,—for we well know that though their votes may be against us, the hearts and judgement of many Catholic gentlemen in this House are with us still,

WILLIAM CHAMBERS, Esq. member for Newport,
said :—

“ I asserted in my former speech that the combination was unnatural and unholy. I believe so still,—I have heard nothing to change my opinion. Here we have been for a fortnight fighting with straws—while the real question has been studiously avoided and kept in the back ground ;—there is a secret spring to which no allusion has heretofore been made. I now assert here openly, that the Catholics of this Province, believing they hold the balance of power, have come to the conclusion that they can govern the country. To any man who has marked the progress of events during the past few months, the proposition must be self-evident, that we have now to consider whether Sir Gaspard LeMarchant or William Walsh, the Catholic Archbishop, is to be Governor of Nova Scotia.—(Hear, hear.)”

Looking calmly round upon what has occurred in Nova Scotia, within the last twelve months, upon what has occurred in Canada, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, within our own knowledge and experience : upon the very recent and palpable manifestations of an aggressive spirit on the part of the Papal power in all the Provinces, I have not hesitated to advise my friends to take higher ground than has ever yet been taken by any Political Party in Nova Scotia, and they have determined to take it boldly in the face of the country.

The Liberal Party has performed its mission. The Constitutional changes, and the public improvements of the country, attest its power and perseverance. The Conservative Party have likewise done their work, in watching and restraining where danger seemed to be apprehended. Neither of these Parties can now give to Nova Scotia such a government as she requires. The Liberals, weakened by the open defection of the Catholics, cannot do it : and the Conservatives, lifted to power on their shoulders, only rule by the sufferance of an Ecclesiastic, who owes no responsibility but to a foreign Potentate, unrecognized by the great body of the People of Nova Scotia. The Head of the Catholic Church in this Province, who denounced Mr. Johnston in 1850, for defending a shoemaker, now denounces

Mr. Young and his Government, because they will not permit Catholics to break people's heads, publish disloyal sentiments, scoff at and revile Protestant clergymen and their doctrines, without retaliation; and to carry on correspondence, in time of war, with the enemies of our country.

The only reason that anybody can give for the overthrow of the late Government, and the construction of a new one, is the reason, "pure and simple" that the Catholic Archbishop so willed it. If the retiring Cabinet did not tender their resignations at the Glebe House, nobody doubts but that the list of the incoming Ministers received His Grace's approval before it was submitted to the Lieutenant Governor. The Cabinet are powerless to carry any measure that the Catholic Priesthood of this city disapprove; and, as their conduct of late has favoured the impression, I assume that gutting houses, breaking heads, corresponding with England's enemies, and defeating crown prosecutions, will not be regarded as offences against the powers that be.

The experience of the past, and the aspects of public affairs at the present time, have satisfied me that, so long as the Protestants of this country are divided, it must be ruled by a Roman Catholic minority. Had the late Government succumbed to what is known here as the Irish Brigade, it would have held the reins of power at this moment. Whenever the new administration ventures to imitate its independence, from that moment its fate will be sealed.

It is clear, to the eye of the most ordinary political observer, that so long as Protestant Novascotians are divided, the Catholics must rule our country. For myself, I am so weary of this domination, that I have felt for some time that any personal sacrifice was light in comparison with the obligation that rested upon me to struggle for a more solid and reputable basis of civil Government. Party considerations ought not to stand in the way of a "consummation so devoutly to be wished;" indeed recent events have convinced me that there is no solid basis for Party, in this country, but such a Protestant organization, as will render the Government independent of Roman Catholic support. An Administration, resting upon an independent Protes-

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tant majority, will alone, after what has occurred, in my judgment, vindicate the honor, and satisfy the public sentiment of this country. Such a Government can only be formed by the co-operation of Protestants all over the Province, who are content to labour in this cause, without reference to old party names, or to bye-gone differences of opinion.

Every public man, whose confidence I share at this moment, (some with more and some with less reluctance) have been forced to this conclusion; and every one of them has consented to forego personal claims, and make any sacrifice, rather than permit the Roman Catholic minority, by shifting from side to side, to rule this Province.

You may remember that, last winter, Mr. Young brought in a Bill, for the extension and improvement of Common School Education. It was met by the uncompromising hostility of the Roman Catholic Priesthood.— During more than half the session he was threatened with the desertion of every Roman Catholic member in both Houses. The Priesthood were only satisfied when certain clauses were prepared, by which separate and exclusively Catholic Schools, from which the Bible would be of course excluded, were provided by law: the funds for their maintenance being raised by taxation, and the management being conceded to those over whom the Government could exercise no control. No sooner were these clauses framed than it was apparent to me that the Bill was defeated; that the Protestants of Nova Scotia would never permit such a blow to be aimed at our Common School system.— It was equally apparent that the Catholics would consent to no measure that the Protestants could conscientiously approve. The Bill was lost, and it is patent to all the world, that, in transferring their support to Mr. Johnston, the Catholics will take very good care that no measure for the improvement of our youth shall be carried which does not meet their approval. The question of Education is shelved, and must so remain, until re-animated by a thorough Protestant organization.

This demand for separate Schools, preferred by the Catholic Archbishop of New York, first roused the

Protestants of the United States to organize in defence of their Common School system, which, however distasteful to the Roman Catholic Priesthood, has challenged the admiration of the world.

I have said that the Catholics in all the British Provinces are acting upon one system, and are rousing, every where, a Protestant spirit, that is manifested by political organizations for self-defence. The Reverend Egerton Ryerson is the Superintendent of Education in Canada. Read what he says in a public letter, dated "Education Office, Toronto, 23rd Dec. 1856 :—

"My last remark is that the same spirit which assails, misrepresents and calumniates our public school system, is equally hostile and calumnious against everything British, from the throne down to the school municipality. You cannot open the journals in which the letters of Bishop Charbonnel and Mr. Bruyere find an echo, without seeing them largely devoted to selections and articles assailing the British Government as the most unjust and execrable in existence, both in its foreign diplomacy and domestic administration, and the British nation as the most heartless and unprincipled on the face of the globe. Were I to insert only those passages of this kind that I have marked, the reader would be surprised and shocked at the concentration of enmity which is cherished and inculcated by these journals against the Government, character, institutions, and prosperity of the mother country. Their hostility to our system of public instruction is only one aspect or phase of a crusade against everything that places Great Britain at the head of modern civilization, and makes her the asylum and guardian of liberty for the oppressed of all nations, and developes her national mind and resources beyond those of any other country in Europe."

So then it is apparent, that, in Canada, the implacable enemies of the British Government are equally the enemies of Common Schools. Let the Protestants of Nova Scotia "mark, learn, and inwardly digest" this passage, and then ask themselves if those who defeated the Education Bill of the last session, are not the same persons, who "thanked God," at the close of the year, "for the humiliation of England."

In New Brunswick, where the Protestant spirit has been roused, the Government, formed last year by a combination

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of Catholics with the old Tory party, has been brought to a dead lock (being only saved by the casting vote of the Speaker) and will be speedily overthrown.

It may be said, and will be said, that the Administration recently formed here, contains but two Catholic members, and that all the principal departments are held by Protestants. This is true. The ruse is a wily one, but will deceive nobody. Rome knows when to grasp and when to shroud her policy, under the disguise of moderation and forbearance. Mr. Johnston's Administration rests upon eight Catholic votes, and while that is the case the Archbishop is master of the situation, and can dictate his own terms at any moment. Mr. Johnston, and I wish to speak of him with all personal respect, holds his present position mainly by the defence of burglars — by stooping to countenance just such people as Mr. Ryerson tells us are equally the enemies of England and of Common School Education.

I have felt it my duty, fellow countrymen, to be thus plain and explicit. Those who think as I do, will, I trust, be prepared to act with me, irrespective of old party names, or of former differences of opinion.

A Committee has been formed here, composed of gentlemen who are disposed to labour in this cause. A correspondence will be opened with Protestants in all the counties, and in the adjoining Provinces. The Committee will be at once announced, and the co-operation of Protestant clergymen, and other influential persons, will, I apprehend, be cheerfully rendered. The over-ruling hand of Providence can alone crown our labours with success. Having discharged my duty to my countrymen with fearlessness and fidelity, I confidently rely upon their sagacity and public spirit, reverently believing that He who has preserved to this land, so far, the blessings of civil and religious liberty, will not desert his own cause, or permit the Protestant interests and feelings of Nova Scotia to be trampled under foot.

I have the honor to be,
Fellow Countrymen,
Your very obedient servant,

JOSEPH HOWE.

HALIFAX, 2d March, 1857.